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THE ECONOMICS OF MILITARISM

Walter W. Sikes

A daily newspaper of Indianapolis juxtaposed two stories during the final hectic weeks of the 80th Congress. One was the story of the breakdown of the national housing program because of the failure of Congress to provide necessary legislation. The other was the story of the passage by Congress of a bill to increase the budget of the Navy by some \$3.5 billions.

In these two stories the whole tragedy of our present national and international crisis is epitomized. A third story points up this tragedy at the level of the individual and the home. The judge of a juvenile court, before whom a twelve-year-old boy was held for striking his mother with a baseball bat, declared that the act was directly chargeable to the housing situation. The boy had struck at his uncle and hit his mother instead. Nine other people lived in the three-room apartment.

The most obvious and the most ominous single conclusion to be drawn from the collaboration on military matters between the Republican controlled Congress and the Democratic Administration is that these two public organs have moved the United States a vast distance down the road toward a militarized state. It is the purpose of this writer to indicate in rather general terms, since space does not permit a detailed analysis, some of the economic aspects of this movement.

INFLATIONARY PRESSURE OF MILITARY EXPENDITURES

At present no one knows exactly the amount of the military budget enacted by the recent Congress under pressure from the Administration. But probably the most accurate estimate is that made in the minority report of the House Committee on Armed Services, which is \$21 billions for the ensuing year. It is due for further increases in the next Congress unless the people awake and reverse the trend.

This report declares that the majority of the Committee in supporting the expansion of the military budget "has avoided a consideration of the important effects of this measure on the American economy." The particular measure referred to is the Selective Service Bill of 1948, passed in the closing hours of the session after a bitter fight, and which will add, according to the minority, some \$6 billions to a program already standing at about \$15 billions for the current year.

"The additional billions of expenditure made necessary by the terms of this bill will prove, in our judgment," the report states, "to be the deciding factor in the return to a controlled economy . . . We believe that strict controls in the uses of such important materials as steel, lumber, oil, coal, aluminum, copper, lead, zinc, and manganese will be required in the near future . . . Price and wage controls may become necessary . . . The conscription program will increase the pressure on the price of raw materials and the competition for workers in military industries will force wages up with another boost to the inflationary spiral."

Some months ago Marriner Eccles, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, was imprudent enough to state that the military program was the greatest single inflationary factor in our economy. He was not reappointed to that office. But the truth of his statement is obvious when one

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WORLD ORDER PUBLICATIONS PLANNED

At a meeting of the Commission on World Order held at Indianapolis, Indiana, June 29, plans were laid for production of basic study materials to be used in the series of Workshops on World Order to be held January to May, 1949. The Workshop programs will center around three principal problems—human rights, political organization, and economic issues. A carefully prepared piece of material, dealing with each of these areas, will be supplied to each Workshop participant.

To prepare these materials the Commission appointed three committees. Harold L. Lunger, pastor of the Austin Boulevard Christian Church, Oak Park, Illinois, will serve as chairman of the committee to prepare the study on human rights. Dr. Frank R. Hall, of Purdue University, was chosen to draft the document. Dr. John L. Davis, dean of Hiram College, was chosen as chairman of the committee dealing with political organization in relation to world order. Dr. Davis was also chosen to prepare the draft document. George Oliver Taylor is chairman of the committee dealing with economic issues in relation to world order and the Rev. Leslie R. Smith, pastor of Central Christian Church, Lexington, Kentucky, will write the manuscript.

DAVISON CHALLENGES COMMUNITY LEADERS

Recently the South Bend (Indiana) *Tribune*, aroused over the prevalence of juvenile delinquency in the community, asked local ministers for suggestions on how to correct conditions. First to be queried was Dr. Frank E. Davison, pastor of First Christian Church. Dr. Davison, "Davy" to his intimates, is a forthright speaker and that is the sort of reply the editor got. "You can't grow character in boys and girls," he replied, "unless there is the atmosphere of religion in the community where they live. No matter what the children are taught in home and church they are smart enough to see that . . . community leaders are seldom in the pews of their church. Some of these boys and girls even know what goes on in the club rooms to which many of these leaders belong." Dr. Davison went on to point out that in the past decade only one or two gifts for religious purposes in the community bore evidence that anybody thought religion was important enough to justify investment in its future; that community leaders seldom attended community interdenominational religious functions, and that the community spends eight times as much on race track gambling, back room gaming tables, private clubs, slot machines and football wagers as it spends on all character-building programs. "The cure for juvenile delinquency lies within the grasp of our community leaders," and "if all of us who have any positions of leadership . . . will unite to throw around our boys and girls the atmosphere that will convince them that we really believe in the good life we will be a long way toward success in our fight . . . As long as we try to satisfy our consciences by talking about delinquency, making speeches about it, writing articles about it and 'passing the buck' to someone else the delinquency curve will continue on its upward trend."

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BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Into the Main Stream, by Charles S. Johnson and Associates. University of N. C. 1947. \$3.50. "A Survey of Best Practices in Race Relations in the South," the subtitle of this excellent book, indicates its content and purpose. This is the book for those who want to know what is really going on in the South at the point of changing race attitudes and practices.

Lost Boundaries, by W. L. White. Harcourt Brace. 1947. \$1.50. Suppose you were a sixteen year old boy, privileged son of a successful doctor, graduating from prep school, having thought all your life that you were "white," and while dressing for a date with your best girl, you discover you are not "white" but "colored." This happened to Albert Johnson, Jr., in 1941. W. L. White tells the story with its moving sequence—very human, very dramatic, very revealing of our subtle as well as our gross sin of racism, on the part of both white and Negro people.

Journal from My Cell, by Roland de Pury. Harper. 1946. \$1.50. The resources of Christian faith in social conflict at its most tragic level have rarely been more poignantly revealed than by Pastor de Pury's Journal written while in a Nazi prison—sometimes with a stub of a pencil surreptitiously kept when discovery would have meant immediate death. For those who ask, What does the church have to do with politics? this is a significant word.

PAMPHLETS OF THE MONTH

Two Giants and One World, by A. William Loos. Friendship Press. 1948. Fifty cents. This study of USSR-USA relations by the staff of the Church Peace Union under the editorship of Dr. Loos is certainly one of the most successful efforts to see this present conflict for what it really is and to suggest effective ways of dealing with it. Excellent material for a study course. The suggestions for using the materials for programs of discussion and action in the appendix should provide many a harassed program chairman with just what is needed.

The Bible and Human Rights. Kathleen W. MacArthur. Sixty Cents. Woman's Press. Based on the report of the President's Commission on Civil Rights. Seven studies, with introduction and bibliography. The author examines the Old and New Testaments and finds such human rights as safety and security of person, citizenship and its privileges, freedom of conscience and expression, equality of opportunity rooted in religious teaching. Characterized by deep insight and telling use of phrase. Preachers will get some striking sermon subjects from it.

Here's the Way to Secure These Rights, by Hanna F. Desser and Ethel C. Phillips. Methodist Church Literature Headquarters. 1948. Twenty-five cents. Very attractive, well written, carefully planned study and action guide on human rights. For church or community groups that want to do something and do not know how to begin or to carry on, this handbook is one of the best. An appendix lists organizations at work in the field and gives a well chosen bibliography.

All books and pamphlets mentioned here may be ordered from Sales Literature Section, 222 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana.

WASHINGTON ROUND-UP

§ The second session of the 80th Congress adjourned in a last minute flurry of "must" legislation. Even before the legislative machinery came to a stop observers were predicting that either President Truman or the Republican Policy Committee might call it back into special session to complete action on vital measures. Also, as Congressmen began their trek to Philadelphia to their respective national conventions the record they left behind was undergoing the scrutiny of the country. Was the 80th Congress, as President Truman charged, "the worst since Thaddeus Stevens' Reconstruction Congress," or did it carry out the mandate of the country, as the Republican majority claims?

§ *Foreign Policy*. Passed the European Recovery Program strongly supported by Secretary of State Marshall and by the country at large. The House, toward the end of the session, under the whip of the Appropriations Committee, headed by Rep. John Taber of New York, sought to cut the appropriation from \$6 billions to approximately \$4 billions. However, the Senate was able to get all but \$95 million written back into the law, principally by allowing the President and Paul G. Hoffman, ERP director, to spend the entire amount within a 12-month period instead of 15 months, if they deem it necessary.

§ The Senate again shelved the St. Lawrence Seaway treaty which would have given the mid-west an outlet to ocean transportation. Once more the opposition of the railroads and the financial interests of the great ports was effective.

§ Congress voted U. S. membership in the International Refugee Organization and approved legislation to admit 205,000 displaced persons per year to the United States for the next two years. The bill adopted is much less desirable than the original Stratton Bill, containing certain restrictive features which, it is claimed, discriminate against Jews. Other restrictions regarding employment, it is claimed, will work hardship on DPs. The bill was finally accepted by those supporting DP legislation rather than see the whole program fail.

§ U. S. membership was also voted in the World Health Organization, thus enabling our country to become one of the charter-member nations.

§ *Labor*. The 80th Congress aroused the ire of labor as few past Congresses have done. The Taft-Hartley law is almost unanimously hated by union labor and its leaders. Both AFL and CIO and the railroad brotherhoods have promised to defeat those who voted for it.

Congress refused to pass legislation fixing 65c per hour as the minimum wage, despite demands of labor for such legislation and support for it by the Administration.

§ *Social Security*. The original Social Security Act provides that its provisions are to be supported by a payroll tax beginning at 1 per cent and gradually rising to 3 per cent. Congress again refused to increase the tax, leaving it at the 1 per cent level, despite increased benefits voted for the aged, the blind, and dependent children. Also refused coverage to 3,500,000 persons not now protected.

Congress also refused to pass legislation providing for medical and health care for the people, fought by powerful medical organizations as "socialized medicine."

The Taft-Ellender-Wagner Housing Bill was another Congressional fatality. It was fought by the powerful real estate lobby as "socialized housing" because it provided for slum clearance and government-aided housing projects for low income workers.

It is said that veteran organizations may demand a special session to enact a housing measure.

The Federal Aid to Education Bill also fell by the wayside. This measure, calling for \$300,000,000 could not

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ON SOCIAL FRONTIERS

Comic Book Ban. Following the example of Mayor Al Feeney of Indianapolis, Indiana, who banned certain types of comic books from the news stands of that city, the South Bend (Indiana) Pharmacy Club, representing nearly all of the independent druggists of that city, voted to remove all comic books from their racks by June 25, declaring a moratorium on sales "until standards of decency can be guaranteed by publishers." The resolution will be placed before the Indiana Pharmaceutical Association meeting at French Lick, Indiana, July 6, and will be sent to the 21 state associations. News distributing companies ordinarily contract with druggists, news stands, and other business concerns to display publications on a commission basis. Thus the merchant has little control over the character of publications displayed on the racks in his establishment.

Goodbye, Restrictive Covenants! By unanimous decisions the Supreme Court of the United States has ruled that neither federal nor state courts may enforce private agreements made among owners of real estate which restrict occupancy to persons of a certain race or color. The cases, sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, arose in Missouri, Michigan, Ohio, and California. The Ohio case involved a suit by L. L. Dickerson, pastor of the Monroe Avenue Church of Christ (Disciples), who was prevented from occupying the parsonage owned by the church because of a restrictive covenant inserted in the deed in 1926. Under the Supreme Court's decision property owners cannot be prevented from making such restrictive covenants, but the fact that neither state nor federal courts can be used to enforce them leaves them without legal effect.

"One Nation, Indivisible, with Equal Rights and Justice for All." Toward the close of the school year 51 children of New York's public school safety patrol were awarded medals by the Automobile Club of New York, the city's board of education and the parochial school authorities. A part of the award was a trip to Washington, with visits to the White House, the Washington Monument, Congress, Lincoln Memorial, and the Smithsonian Institution. But the trip had to be called off and the children disappointed. For, as the Institute for American Democracy points out, "Americans in New York had forgotten that Americans in Washington have rules that bar Negro children from living with white children. Hotels would not accommodate them together." So the trip was cancelled.

Breaking Down Barriers. The Senate by a vote of 38 to 37 sent back to committee the resolution which would have provided for regional graduate schools for Negroes in Southern states. This constitutes a setback for efforts to get around recent Supreme Court decisions requiring equal opportunities for Negroes in the field of graduate study. * * * Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, Dr. Arthur H. Compton, Chancellor, announces that henceforth qualified Negro students will be admitted to its graduate school of arts and sciences. The schools of medicine and social work are already open to Negro students. * * * The library board of Charlottesville, Virginia, announces that its colored branch has been closed and that henceforth all citizens will have equal opportunity to use the facilities of the main library. The board states "there appears to be no occasion at this time for segregation of the races in their use of the city library," and that the experience of other Virginia cities "has demonstrated that the operation of separate facilities are unnecessary" and the added expense unjustified. * * * The American Sociological Society has elected Dr. E. Franklin Frazier, head of the department of sociology at Howard University, its president. Dr. Frazier is the first Negro to hold this post.

"GRAPES OF WRATH — 1948 VERSION"

Ruth D. Estes

Federal health and housing programs for migrant agricultural workers stopped the first of 1948. Yet the number of migrants—now about 2½ million men, women and children—increases month by month. That means fewer jobs and more hardship for every migrant family. Freezes in Texas, hurricanes in Florida, or floods in the middle West intensify the suffering of these people who have no home.

The Christian churches of America, acting through the Home Missions Council, have developed a program of service to migrants. A staff of workers conducting child care centers, providing recreation for children and adults, giving personal counseling, holding worship services and the like across the country give rootless migrant families a sense of worth as human beings.

Disciples of Christ share in this program both through financial contributions and through personal service of college youth in the mid-West area during the summer months of June to September.

A training conference was held at Camp Warren, Michigan, June 14-18. Some 70 persons, mostly young people prepared here for the work which they will do with migrants in the harvest fields of the middle West. Disciple representatives in this work are Della Louise Cross, Betty Eller, Christine Hattendorf, Marie Jump, Norma Kirkham, Ava Dale Plummer, Marjorie Wilson, Ella Williams, Vern J. Rossman, all of Phillips University; Marilyn Digweed of Eureka College. These young people will work in Gratiot and Bay counties and in Grand Junction and Lansing, Michigan, in Rochelle, Illinois, and in Minnesota.

SENDING GIFTS OVERSEAS IS EXPENSIVE

Last year Church World Service, Inc., spent 1½ million dollars in sending relief supplies. The average transportation cost for the 45 countries to which shipments are made is about 15c per pound. This includes sorting, moth proofing, folding, baling, wrapping, steel strapping, and an overall cloth covering for each package. Therefore when sending goods to CWS please be sure to send a check covering the cost of handling at the rate of 15c per pound. This request also applies to shipments sent to Missions Building.

RELIEF PROJECTS FOR DISCIPLES

As a part of their material aid program the Disciples of Christ are suggesting two specific projects for the coming year. Churches, church groups, or individuals may select one or both of the following: (1) *Toilet Kits*: Can be made out of dress print, cretonne or muslin. Simply make a bag with drawstring, large enough to hold two towels, two wash cloths, two bars of soap, a comb and a toothbrush. (2) *Night Gowns and Pajamas*: These are much needed items in hospitals and asylums for children or the aged. They may be made in any sizes and of any suitable material, such as outing flannel, print or muslin. Completed projects should be sent to the Department of Social Welfare, 222 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana, with a check for 15c per pound to cover cost of sending abroad. Be sure to send check separate in a letter!

CARE PACKAGES ACKNOWLEDGED

During the winter months, especially around Christmas-time, a good many contributions came to the office of the Department of Social Welfare designated for CARE packages. Since we cannot supply names of individuals abroad many of these were channeled to our British brethren through Mr. W. Lister, secretary of the Social Questions Committee of our British churches. Some 43 packages were handled in this manner. In a recent letter Mr. Lister writes, "I can assure you that all were simply overjoyed to think of the marvelous spirit of generosity that prompted such Christian action." Those who made contributions to CARE at this time through the Department will consider the above as acknowledgement of their gift.

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considers that this program consumes vast quantities of all kinds of materials, occupies the facilities of a large part of our manufacturing plant, employs much of our labor force, and releases into the market billions of dollars of purchasing power, while at the same time it reduces the amount of consumer goods available to meet this demand.

Section 18 of the Selective Service Act of 1948 grants unlimited power to the President to take priority on steel and to control the products of industry for military use. He can require producers of steel and steel products to furnish such amount of their products as he deems necessary before using any of these for civilian or other governmental use. Also he is given the power to demand of "any person operating a plant, mine or other facility" which he deems capable of supplying military requirements to produce what he stipulates at the price he sets. Failure to comply makes one liable to a fine of \$50,000 and three years in prison, plus the seizure of the plant by the government.

THE DEPLETION OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES

This program not only confronts the nation with the evil choice between run-away inflation and a strictly regimented economy, but it also threatens to deprive the body politic of its life blood of goods and services so necessary to survival. "We used our soil, mineral, and forest resources wastefully during the war," the report continues. "Instead of taking steps to replenish the war depletions, this bill would initiate a program of expenditure . . . The effect on the standard of living of the average American is one of the more serious results to be expected from the diversion of materials to the huge military program. There will be less lumber for housing and fewer automobiles because of reduced supplies of steel available for civilian uses. Even rationing of gasoline may be necessary. Food shortages will be intensified . . . textiles will again be short . . . much needed construction will have to be deferred. We will have fewer new school buildings, fewer new hospitals. We are at a stage where there is no slack in the use of our resources, including both men and materials, and the imposition of a permanent military program can only be effected by the switching of our resources from the production of the necessary civilian goods . . . We cannot conceal the ugly fact that the stability of our economic life will be imperiled by these new requirements. We believe that the American people should be informed of the fundamental changes that must come about as this program begins to withdraw goods and services from the economy."

While launching us on a new wave of military expansion, the Congress took no action of consequence to meet the needs of the American people for those very necessities of life which, in competition with the pressure of military demands, will become increasingly more neglected and which must be met if people are to live.

Not only did Congress kill the housing program, but it failed to make any provision for hospitals and medical care, for protection against illness, unemployment or old age; for conservation of our rapidly disappearing and irreplaceable natural resources of soil and minerals, or for the education of its children and youth. Measures aiming at these ends were in Congress, but they either got no attention or were cut to shreds in the process of political haggling.

The only conservation measure enacted, ironically enough, provided for the withdrawal of vast quantities of these priceless resources for possible future military use. The National Security Resources Board is authorized to stock-pile \$3.15 billions worth of "strategic and critical materials."

The one bright spot in this dark picture was the voting of \$6 billion to help rehabilitate the broken economies of Europe and Asia, an amount equal to about 30 per cent of our current military budget.

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secure the same attention as the slightest demand of the military.

The 80th Congress was also deaf to appeals for legislation in behalf of human rights. Despite the report of the President's Commission on Human Rights and frequent prodding from the White House, and despite also the strongly worded plank in the Republican platform, no bill was passed. Among the bills shelved were the Anti-Lynching, Anti-Poll Tax and the FEPC bills. The single exception was Senator Langer's amendment to the Selective Service Act which prohibits the levy of poll tax on members of the armed services. Failure of the major parties to enact human rights legislation may accentuate the drift of Negroes to Henry Wallace's third party.

Spurred by President Truman's appeals to the "grass roots" on his recent Western trip, Congress in its closing days voted for continued farm price supports through 1949. The Commodity Credit Corporation was given a federal charter and its life continued.

The Mundt-Nixon Bill, ostensibly aimed at Communists but believed by many to be capable of being used against non-Communists as well, passed the house but died in the Senate. Since Rep. Mundt will probably move up to the Senate after November it is likely that this battle will have to be fought over again in the next Congress.

§ Taxes. Congress passed, over Presidential veto, a tax reduction bill retroactive to January 1, 1948, which takes 7,400,000 persons off the income tax rolls and gives reductions of from 5 per cent to 12½ per cent to the remainder, plus increased exemptions from \$500 to \$600, reduced gift and inheritance taxes and permits married couples to split their income for tax purposes. Warned by the Administration and by its own advisors that such legislation would be disastrous to the national economy, Congress went ahead with its program, admitting that new taxes might have to be imposed after election. Seldom has Congress so openly bid for political support in a forthcoming election and on such a flimsy and insincere pretext.

§ Conscription. The first session of the 80th Congress began with predictions that a universal military training law would be enacted within 90 days. That prediction failed. The same prediction was made with the opening of the second session last January. That also failed, despite such lobbying by the armed forces as has never before been seen in Washington. In the closing weeks of the session a draft law was introduced as an emergency measure. The bill was finally approved by the Senate in the closing hours of the session. Thus, the United States, for the first time in its history, drafts young men 19 through 25 years of age for 21 months of military service. Labelled as temporary and as a substitute for UMT, military leaders declare that it is neither and that they will be back before the next Congress with demands for conscription.

The military received practically everything it asked of the 80th Congress. The president recommended \$11 billions for the military establishment. Congress gave it \$13.2 billions. The Administration asked for a 55 Group Air Force. Congress voted 70 Groups. The minority of the House Committee on Armed Services says military expenditures will total \$21 billions under the new appropriations. This is slightly more than 50 per cent of our total federal budget. The President submitted to Congress in January, 1948, a budget which showed that 79 per cent of the \$40 billions asked was to pay for past wars and for preparations for possible future wars. Military appropriations voted by this session must be added to that figure.

§ The 80th Congress, like all Congresses, did some good things and many bad things. Make up your own mind whether it was the worst in our history, as the President claims, or just an average mediocre legislative body.